FROM LENIN TO PUTIN: THE CONTINUITY OF SOVIET POWER

Most Orthodox Christians agree that the State founded by Lenin in October, 1917 was the most evil in human history to this date. A regime that was openly and officially antichristian overthrew the greatest Christian empire in history and proceeded to try and destroy everything and everyone that in any way retained any kind of loyalty or similarity to the pre-revolutionary past. Recalling the French revolution, but much more radical, the Russian revolution killed perhaps one hundred million of its own, Soviet citizens, and many millions more in other countries, blanketing, at its greatest extent, the whole land mass from Berlin to Vladivostok in a nightmare of militant atheism that caused those who were under threat of being returned to it to commit suicide in droves…

However, there is much less agreement on whether the present-day of Vladimir Putin is a continuation and resurrection of the Leninist regime or not. This is an important question; for in 1918, at her last genuine Local Council, the Russian Orthodox Church led by Martyr-Patriarch Tikhon anathematized the Soviet regime forbidding her members to have nothing whatsoever to do with these "outcasts of humanity". (Only against the regimes of Julian the Apostate and Napoleon has the Orthodox Church ever issued similar decrees.) This "decree of irreconcilability" has never been rescinded, so if the Putinist regime is truly the successor of the Leninist one, our attitude to it must be similarly irreconcilable. The question therefore is: is the present-day Putinist regime Leninist in essence?

In order to answer this question we have to separate what is essential to Leninism from what is not, and ask whether Putin retains that essence even if in many other ways his regime may be very different… Our thesis is that the essence of Leninism is *loyalty to Lenin himself*, and that while many things have changed since 1917, devotion to Lenin, and a refusal to condemn him or his reincarnation, Stalin, remains the bond binding together all the epochs of Soviet and post-Soviet history to the present day, as witnessed above all by the continuing worship of his body in the mausoleum on Red Square. Lenin's teachings are no longer believed in, his party no longer holds power, even his vitriolic hatred of God and Christianity has gone. But he himself remains alive and well in the hearts of the majority of the Russian people. And it is this psychological and spiritual bond, more powerful than any ideological sympathy or antipathy, that makes Leninism a continuing force. Moreover, it is a force that any succeeding leader like Putin can tap into – so long as the idol still remains in place. And why does the idol still remain in place? Because neither in 1991 nor at any other time

has there been any thoroughgoing *repentance* for the sins of the Soviet past or formal renunciation of Lenin.

*

Let us briefly summarize the main stages of Russian history since 1917:-

1. **1917-21.** The first three-and-a-half years of Soviet power present us with all the familiar signs of Leninism: theft, murder, blasphemy, sexual depravity, civil and international war – all on an industrial, unprecedented scale. Before the revolution, revolutionaries like Stalin robbed banks and post offices. After the revolution, they robbed whole classes and provinces – and then raped and murdered the inhabitants. "War communism" established the principle that nothing, nothing whatsoever is holy – and especially not the Holy Church. However, in March, 1921, the Thirteenth Party Congress established that "factionalism", i.e. dissent, is forbidden, and that one thing after all *is* holy – the will of the Party as expressed in the will of Lenin. This decree on the "dictatorship of the Party", which was in fact the dictatorship of Lenin, formalized the essence of Leninism.
2. **1921-28.** Having established the essence of the system as being his own infallibility as the Vicar of History, Lenin could afford to relax on other, less important principles of communism. Thus the New Economic Policy, the reintroduction of a limited degree of capitalism and private property and a certain let-up in religious persecution was allowed… However, the death of Lenin in January, 1924 raised the question: how to preserve the essence of Leninism without Lenin himself? The answer was: the preservation of the body of Lenin, and the institution of its worship. Now even while leaders might change, and policies might change, Lenin himself remained – unchanging and eternal.[1]
3. **1928-39.** Nevertheless, the need for a single infallible *will* remained, and Lenin could no longer express that will from beyond the grave. So his successor, the new Lenin, has to be found. After much political infighting, Stalin won the battle for recognition as the new Lenin, and proceeded to re-establish the absolute unity of will by eliminating all his opponents, actual and potential. This involved, among other things, killing 14 million Ukrainians by famine, driving the True Church into the underground, and eliminating all the Old Bolsheviks who remembered that Stalin was not Lenin.
4. **1939-45.** In Germany, however, there emerged another infallible will whom even Stalin could not destroy. And so,

[1] Alexei Yurchak, "Bodies of Lenin: The Hidden Science of Communist Sovereignty", *Representations,* Winter, 2015, pp. 116-157.

searching as ever for new means of consolidating his rule, Stalin decided to borrow certain things from Hitler (just as Hitler, by his own admission, borrowed certain things from Stalin). The internationalism of world revolution was now dropped (together with its main advocate, Trotsky), and in its place came “socialism in one country”. Instead of denigrating the whole of Russian history, certain aspects of it (especially the despotism of Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great) were recalled with pride. Patriotism ceased to be a dirty word, and the official church was now used as a vehicle of stirring it up in believers – only its object now was not Orthodox Russia, but anti-Orthodox Russia. And these new emotional resources proved to be invaluable when Hitler invaded Russia; with their aid, the unnatural situation of two infallible popes was corrected by Stalin’s victory over the anti-pope.

5. **1945-53.** Now, however, Stalin reverted to type. The nationalist deviation, permissible during the struggle against Hitler, was corrected as the revolution again recovered its internationalist direction. (At the same time, the newest member of the Leninist club, Mao’s China, was made to feel in no uncertain terms that it was a very junior partner to Soviet Russia.) The main external enemy, again, was Anglo-Saxon capitalism; Orthodoxy was again repressed, unless it was expressed in support of the infallible leader; and the numbers of those in the camps surpassed even their pre-war peak.
6. **1953-91.** With the death of Stalin, the struggle to find the new Lenin began again. In 1956, one of the contenders, Khruschev, exposed the sins of Stalin at a secret meeting of the Party. However, this was like a Roman cardinal saying that the Pope was not infallible – Khruschev was found insufficiently Leninist and fell from power. However, none of his successors – Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko and Gorbachev – was able to plug the credibility gap that now opened up, and as the inferiority of the Soviet system to its capitalist rival became more and more evident the desperate attempt of Gorbachev to import some western flexibility and freedom into social and economic life led to the collapse of the Soviet empire and the break-up of the Union itself.
7. **1991-2000.** The 1990s, the period of Yeltsin’s presidency, represented the moment when it looked to many as if Leninism were finally doomed. Something resembling real democracy and the free market was introduced. But the market reforms were so radical and sudden – introduced by Chicago-school advocates of “shock therapy” as the only method of changing communism into capitalism - that millions found themselves plunged into poverty, while a few clever entrepreneurs with links to the government – the so-called “oligarchs” – made vast fortunes through rigged privatisations. The result: capitalism was discredited in the minds of the

people. Again, when the supposed democrat Yeltsin, determined to push through his reforms come what may, defied the sentence of the Constitutional Court and sent the tanks against the elected delegates of the Duma, the result was the discrediting also of democracy in the minds of the people.[2] But still more serious was the "acquitting" of the Communist Party in a quasi-trial in 1992, the failure of the True Russian Church to oust the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate (whose bishops remain now, as in Soviet times, are KGB agents) and above all, the failure to remove Lenin from the mausoleum. So the essence of Leninism remained intact…

*

When Putin came to power on the first day of the new millennium, he soon demonstrated his political sympathies. The fall of the Soviet Union, he said, had been "a geopolitical tragedy". Such, perhaps, was only to be expected of a former KGB agent who had been appointed head of the KGB-FSB only a few years before. Unfortunately, however, most of the western world, and even the Orthodox world, chose to ignore these facts. They were determined to believe that Putin's regime represented, not a KGB-staged coup and the beginning of a gradual return to Sovietism, but a continuation of the Yeltsin regime, albeit at a slower pace of political and economic change.

Of course, the *pretence* of continuity with the Yeltsin regime was preserved: Yeltsin himself handed over power to (the unelected) Putin, and multi-party elections to the Duma remained in existence. However, in the course of time the largest parties (including the communists) turned out to be suspiciously close to Putin in their views, failing to form a real opposition; his own elections were manifestly rigged, and the system changed to enable him to rule virtually uninterruptedly until the present; and the last vestiges of democracy at the local, provincial level were eliminated. Moreover, Putin evolved a doctrine of "sovereign democracy" which meant, in effect, that Russia was a "democracy" but with himself as sovereign…

Thus, as Roger Bootle writes, "In place of the tired and rotten value system of Communism, the prime value and objective of the modern Russian state is quite simply *pro bono Putino…*"[3] But this, too, is essentially communist. For in the last analysis Lenin and Stalin did not rule for the benefit of anyone other than themselves…

---

[2] Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine,* London: Penguin, 2007, chapters 11 and 12.

[3] Bootle, *The Trouble with Europe,* London: Nicholas Brealy Publishing, 2015, p. 215.

A deeper and more sinister continuity was that the stripping of Russia's natural resources continued – only by a different clan of bandits... When considering the Putinist mafia state's pillaging of the national assets, we must remember that Leninism and banditism have existed in the closest symbiosis ever since Stalin robbed the Tbilisi bank and the Sochi post office to provide Lenin with funds for revolutionary terror in the early 1900s. The victims in the 1920s were the nobles, the industrialists and the Church, in the 1930s - the peasants, the generals and the Old Bolsheviks, in the 1940s - the Germans, the Crimean Tatars and other conquered peoples, and in the 1990s - all small-time investors and account-holders. In the 2000s it was the oligarchs' turn: in true Leninist style, Putin "expropriated the expropriators". However, far from Putin "cleaning up" the country after the oligarchs' excesses in the 1990s, which is what he claimed to be doing, he simply replaced one clan of bandits with another, sharing out the proceeds among those who recognized his power as the chief thief.

The transfer here was effected, not by Yeltsin, but by the Jewish oligarch Berezovsky, who hoped that Putin would rule to the advantage of him and his clan. (Since Yeltsin had also been involved in the pillaging, Putin's first act as president was to give immunity from prosecution to Yeltsin and his family.) However, Berezovsky was deceived: Putin put his own St. Petersburg mafia in charge and forced Berezovsky to flee into English exile until his recent mysterious "suicide". Others who pretended to some measure of political and economic independence, such as Khodorkovsky, were imprisoned on trumped-up charges and/or driven out of the country…

Now Putin was free to become the godfather of all godfathers; he and his cronies made fabulous gains, most of which were spirited abroad; and Putin himself, according to the *Sunday Times*, became the world's richest man… Taking advantage of the high prices for oil and gas, Putin was able to distribute some of the profits to the middle classes, keeping them happy for the time being. (There were murmurings from them in 2012, but these were comparatively easily suppressed.) Moreover, he increased the numbers of bureaucrats, 40% of whom were KGB, and fattened their pay packets - in this way he guaranteed their support, a tactic he borrowed from the Bolsheviks in the Civil War period…

But the poor remained poor, and the gap between the richest and the poorest became the highest in the world except in some Caribbean islands. State institutions and services, such as education and health, were starved of funds. The only notable exceptions were the armed forces and the security services, which received vast increases reminiscent of Hitler's rearming in the 1930s.

*

Like all Soviet leaders, Putin shows a marked antipathy to the West, and a steadfast conviction that his country is morally superior to the West. The problem is: the extreme moral degradation of contemporary Russian society is plain for all to see. The most obvious explanation for this is the many decades of Soviet rule, when religious faith was persecuted and morality was equated with what was beneficial for the revolution. However, Putin deals with this problem by putting the blame exclusively on the Yeltsin period (because that was the most westernizing). Before Yeltsin, he argued in 2012 in a speech to the Federal Assembly, Soviet society had been distinguished by "charity, compassion and sympathy" (!): "Today Russian society has an obvious deficit in spiritual bonds, a deficit in everything that made us at all times stronger, more powerful, in which we always prided ourselves – that is, such phenomena as charity, compassion and sympathy… The situation that has been created is a consequence of the fact that some 15 to 20 years ago 'the ideological stamps of the former epoch' were rejected… Unfortunately, at that time many moral signposts were lost…"

The following year, however, at the Valdai forum at which many westerners were present, Putin felt able to boast that, in spite of this "obvious deficit in spiritual bonds", Russia under his rule preserved "Christian values" better than the West: "We see that many Euro-Atlantic countries have de facto gone down the path of the rejection of… Christian values. Moral principles are being denied… What could be a greater witness of the moral crisis of the human socium than the loss of the capacity for self-reproduction. But today practically all developed countries can no longer reproduce themselves. Without the values laid down in Christianity and other world religions, without the norms of ethics and morality formed in the course of millennia, people inevitably lose their human dignity. And we consider it natural and right to defend these values."[4]

The strange thing about this extraordinarily hypocritical statement is that Putin pretends to be entirely unconscious of the fact that with regard to the "Christian value" that he specifically cites here, "self-reproduction", Russia performs worse than any western country. Thus even after taking migration into account, the twenty-eight countries of the European Union have a natural growth in population that is twice as high as Russia's! And if he is referring not to the balance between the birth rate and the death rate, but to *homosexuality* as a factor that by definition inhibits reproduction, then the situation is little better in Russia than in the West. For in

[4] Andrei Movchan, "Rossia i Zapad: kto moral'nee?" (Russia and the West: who is more moral?"), http://slon.ru/russia/rossiya_i_zapad_kto_moralnee-1114248.xhtml, June 17, 2014.

spite of Putin's much-vaunted ban on pro-gay propaganda to minors, the vice remains legal among adults. Thus a marriage between two women was recently registered officially in Moscow.[5] Homosexuality even flourishes in places from which it should have been banished first of all. Thus among the three hundred bishops of the Moscow Patriarchate, 50 according to one estimate (Fr. Andrei Kuraev) and 250 according to another (Fr. Gleb Yakunin) are homosexuals…

In other spheres relating to morality, Russia, according to United Nations statistics, occupies the following positions in the world league tables:

1st in suicides of adults, children and adolescents;
1st in numbers of children born out of wedlock;
1st in children abandoned by parents;
1st in absolute decline in population;
1st in consumption of spirits and spirit-based drinks;
1st in consumption of strong alcohol;
1st in tobacco sales;
1st in deaths from alcohol and tobacco;
1st in deaths from cardiovascular diseases;
2nd in fake medicine sales;
1st in heroin consumption (21st in world production).

These statistics show that Russia, far from leading the world in the practice of Christian virtue, is perhaps the most corrupt country of all. As regards general criminality, theft, corruption and murder (including abortion), Russia is very near the top of the league, and this not least because the government itself has taken the lead in these activities, making Russia into a mafia state run by and for a small clique of fantastically rich criminals. Thus the general picture is one of *extreme moral degradation.*

*

Moral degradation within the country is matched by cruelty and hatred to those outside… The most important of Putin's decisions in the early years was his re-starting of the war against the Chechens, which he carried out with extreme brutality. The KGB provided the justification for the war by blowing up an apartment block in Ryazan, killing four hundred people, and blaming the atrocity on Chechen terrorists… Whistle-blowers and truth-seekers were found who exposed these crimes, such as the journalist Anna Politkovskaya or the former agent Litvinenko; they were simply murdered (Litvinenko through a mini-atomic bomb). [6] The KGB

[5] "V Moskve pozhenili dvukh nevest" (In Moscow two brides were married), http://www.kp.ru/daily/26270/3148680/

[6] Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War,* London: Bloomsbury, 2008, pp. 105-107.

existed to carry out these sentences, to justify and cover up Putin's decisions – and to share in the proceeds.

Having imposed a pro-Russian puppet government on the Chechens, Putin now turned to other "troublemakers". But not before declaring, at Munich in 2007, that Russia reserved the right of first strike in a nuclear war – a right that not even the Soviet Union had ever claimed. Although the world appeared not to notice, Russia appeared not simply to have recommenced the Cold War, but to be preparing for a hot, thermonuclear one…

Then, in the next year Russia invaded Georgia, punishing them for their "Orange" revolution in favour of the West and annexing Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

"Moreover," writes Armando Marques Guedes, "the Russian Administration signalled it was set for a sort of repeat performance. Toward the end of December 2008, the Kremlin announced an upgrade and an unexpected large-scale restructuring of its Armed Forces, along with a change in its military doctrine. All of this – as was later explained by the Russian Minister of Defence – was engaged in so that her Armed Forces would be ready to fight on 'three fronts simultaneously in local and regional conflicts such as that of Georgia'. He thereafter defined the 'post-Soviet space' as the preferred location for such interventions, which he envisioned as coming to pass 'during the year' of 2009…"[7]

It actually came to pass in the year 2014, with the annexation of Crimea and military intervention in the Donbass. Putin's actions here resembled those of Milosevic in the former Yugoslavia.[8] In both cases, the strategy was to rebuild a failed communist empire-state by artificially stirring up ethnic conflicts in neighbouring states that have separated from the empire and then sending in the troops on the pretence of "liberating" co-ethnics (Russians and Serbs) from their supposedly "fascist" oppressors (West Ukrainian "Banderites" and Croats).

However, the most striking parallel to Putin's actions in the Ukraine comes from the truly fascist state of Nazi Germany in 1938, when Hitler carved up Czechoslovakia on the pretence of rescuing the Sudeten Germans from their Czech oppressors. Nor is this the only similarity between the regimes of Putin and Hitler.[9] These

---

[7] Guedes, "The 'Five Day War', The Invasion of Georgia by the Russian Federation", pp. 9-10.

[8] Vera Mironova and Maria Snegovaya, "Putin is behaving in Ukraine like Milosevic did in Serbia", *New Republic,* June 19, 2014, http://www.newrepublic.com/article/118260/putin-behaving-ukraine-milosevic-did-serbia.

[9] Igor Eidman, "Россия Ельцина-Путина повторяет историю Германии 1918–1938 годов", *Fakeoff,* May 14, 2015, http://fakeoff.org/politics/rossiya-eltsina-

similarities are the result not only of the general close similarity between the “twin totalitarianisms” of communism and fascism, but also of the fact that Russia never underwent a “decommunization” programme in 1991 comparable to that undergone by Germany in 1945.

Indeed, a good way of seeing how little modern Russia has been truly “decommunized” is to imagine that Germany in 1945 had not been thoroughly crushed militarily and “denazified” politically and culturally, but had been allowed to develop in the way that Russia has been allowed to develop under Putin. According to this imagined scenario, Germany was allowed to retain almost all its Nazis cadres with no trial of any Nazi war criminals. Some changes had been made in its political system, but the SS remained in place and the Nazi party continued in existence and continued to do well in the polls with many members in the Reichstag. The party seemed to be on excellent terms with the president, and its leader was given awards by the official church, which remained pro-Nazi and was headed by a member of the SS. The army had been much reduced, but vast sums were being poured into its modernization, including the latest weapons of mass destruction, and the swastika had been restored. One neighbouring country had been invaded by the Wehrmacht, and another had been undermined by Nazi propaganda and undercover agents, together with large shipments of tanks and artillery. The Jews were again being reviled in public, and the West was being threatened with nuclear annihilation on television. Hitler’s Berlin bunker, over which a mausoleum had been constructed, was greatly honoured and his military victories were being feted and his political repressions and murders justified. A cult of personality of the new leader was being encouraged, a modernized version of the Hitler youth movement had been started, and genetically pure Aryan boys and girls were being encouraged to get together and bear children for the Reich. One female member of parliament even suggested that “material” from the genius leader should be sent to women around the country so that they could give birth to his genius offspring.[10] Journalists and political opponents were being killed, and anti-Nazi churches were being deprived of their property on various quasi-legal excuses. A close relationship existed between the government and organized crime, corruption was at all-time record levels, and Germany was at the top of the list on various indices of social degeneration (abortion, drug-dealing, child mortality, suicide, etc.) issued by the United Nations.[11]

---

putina-povtoryaet-istoriyu-germanii-1918-1938-godov.

[10] Мизулина предлагает россиянкам рожать от Путина, получая «материал» почтой, - СМИ”, October 6, 2014, http://www.trust.ua/news/101335-mizulina-predlagaet-rossiyankam-rozhat-ot-putina-poluchaya-material-pochtoj---smi.html

[11] Andrei Movchan, Россия и Запад: кто моральнее? http://slon.ru/russia/rossiya_i_zapad_kto_moralnee-1114248.xhtml, June 17, 2014.

If this were happening in Germany today, we can imagine the uproar, the calls from all sides to uproot the neo-Nazi menace. But although something very similar is happening in Russia today in reality and not in imagination, the response of the world has been much more muted. There are few who see this as a resurrection of Leninism or Sovietism, although this is clearly what is happening in fact…

Although the Soviet victory over fascism in 1945 is now celebrated as the greatest festival on the Russian Federation's calendar, and any criticism of the Red Army's (extremely cruel) conquest of the Third Reich is now a criminal offence, the most striking aspect of today's Russia is what can only be called its *fascism*. Of course, Putin accuses the Ukrainian regime of being fascist. But as so often with totalitarian regimes (whether fascist or communist), the truth is the exact opposite of the propaganda: Russia is now what it accuses Ukraine of being - a fascist state in all but name.

Moreover, it is Fascism tinged with the most abominable *blasphemy*: KGB Patriarch Cyril Gundiaev (codename "Mikhailov") declared in 2009 that the atheist Red Army's victory in 1945 was not only holy, but also that Stalin had thereby redeemed all the sins of the 1930s and had even "trampled down death by death"…[12]

One of the clearest proofs that Russia is returning to Sovietism is in the use of Soviet symbolism. Already in the early years of Putin's reign the Red Army was given back its red flag and Soviet anthem (the music, if not the words), and "ecclesiastical Stalinism" in the former of icons of Stalin and hagiographies of the great leader became commonplace. More recently, and especially since the invasion of the Crimea, statues of Lenin have been re-erected, and the hammer-and-sickle and other communist symbolism again flutters in many places (even in conjunction with the Cross of Christ!).

*

The contrast with Ukraine is striking. From 1991 until 2014, in spite of abortive attempts to free itself from its Soviet past, such as the 2004 "Orange" revolution, Ukraine remained in the grip of the Russian KGB, which did not hesitate to use force in order to impose its will on its satellite and retain its control over Ukraine's army and secret services.[13] However, when the last Putin-style bandit President, Yanukovich, was ejected by the popular rebellion of

[12] Vladimir Moss, "1945 год и 'богословие победы' в Московской патриархии", https://www.academia.edu/

[13] Андрей Илларионов, "Боевой путь ФСБ в Украине", Online Kiev, June 10, 2014, http://kiev-online.net.ua/politika/andrei-illarionov-boevoi-put-fsb-v-ukrai.html

Euromaidan in February, 2014, a remarkable transformation began to take place. Statues of Lenin were torn down all over the country, genuine elections were held, and most recently and significantly the President Poroshenko and the Ukrainian parliament have passed legislation whose aim is the final decommunization of Ukraine.[14]

The legislation consists of four bills. The first acknowledges a long list of movements and organizations that fought for a Ukraine independent of the Soviets. The "taboo" on these organizations is now lifted, and their deeds can be openly and freely analyzed by historians and others without fear of reprisals. The second bill opens the secret police archives, thereby making possible impartial historiography and the prosecution of communist criminals. The third bill says that Second World War began in 1939 with the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, rather than in 1941 with the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. The fourth bill prohibits the "propaganda of the Communist and/or National Socialist totalitarian regimes" in Ukraine. "In addition," writes Alexander Motyl, "to advocating the removal of Communist monuments and public symbols and the renaming of streets and cities, the bill attempts to distinguish between materials that promote Communist and Nazi regimes, which is prohibited, and those that express pro-regime views, which would not be deemed illegal… The assumption underlying the [four] bills is that since communism and Nazism were equally evil ideologies, condemnation of one necessarily entails, both logically and morally, condemnation of the other. If de-Nazification is crucial, so too is decommunization." [15]Of course, legislation is one thing, and its full implementation is another. And it must be admitted that Ukraine is only just beginning to free itself from the corruption of its Soviet past. In particular, there is evidence that the Russian KGB still has strong influence in the Ukrainian armed forces.[16] Nevertheless, these bills are precisely the kind of legislation that provides proof that a country is serious about decommunizing itself.

Russia, in stark contrast with Ukraine, has not only not started to decommunize herself in this way: she is actively "re-communizing" herself. And it is precisely that this fact that, at a deeper psychological level, motivates many Russians (but by no means all) to hate the Ukraine, as Cain hated Abel. As Sergei Yekelchyk writes: "The Ukrainian revolution of 2014 threatens the ideology of Putin's regime. It questions Russia's identity. It challenges Russia's plan to

---

[14] "Порошенко подписал законы о декоммунизации Украины", March 20, 2015, http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/news/2015/05/15/n_7199737.shtml.

[15] Alexander J. Motyl, "Kiev's Purge. Behind the New Legislation to Decommunize Ukraine", *Foreign Affairs,* **April 28, 2015.**

[16] Matthew Fisher, "Russian infiltration of Ukrainian military complicates Canadian training mission", *National Post,* April 14, 2015, http://www.nationalpost.com/m/wp/blog.html?b=news.nationalpost.com%2F%2Fnews%2Fworld%2Frussian-infiltration-of-ukrainian-military-complicates-canadian-training-mission.

restore its influence in the region. It also shows that a Putinite regime can be destroyed by a popular revolution. No wonder Russia has recalled its ambassador from Ukraine and refuses to recognize the country's new government..."[17]

*

There are some aspects of Soviet history that have not yet repeated themselves during Putin's reign. One of these is the large-scale imprisoning of dissidents in the Gulag (although large extra prisons are being built). Another is the open persecution of the Orthodox Faith (although True Orthodox (that is, anti-Soviet) Christians get no favours from this government).

However, the fact that not all the aspects of Leninism have been restored is small comfort when so much *is* being restored. Just as cancer remains dangerous and life-threatening even when only a few cancerous cells remain in the body, so the present incipient recommunization can quickly develop into something that threatens the whole world, As Metropolitan Anastasy, first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, wrote in 1938: "There is nothing more dangerous than if Russia were to want to assimilate anything from the sad inheritance left by degenerate Bolshevism: everything that its corrupting atheist hand has touched threatens to infect us again with the old leprosy."

The metropolitan's words have proved to be prophetic. When the Soviet Union fell in 1991, there were many who rejoiced in the supposed fall of Bolshevism. But there was no root-and-branch purge, and so communism has revived. Above all, Lenin still lies in the mausoleum, enjoying that immunity from prosecution (and corruption) that only Egyptian Pharaohs and Roman Popes can enjoy. Before the revolution, St. John of Kronstadt said that Russia without the tsar would be "a stinking corpse". The corpse continues to stink. And nobody in power is trying to take it out of the room…

May 7/20, 2015.
Apodosis of Pascha.

[17] Yekelchyk, "In Ukraine, Lenin finally falls", WPOpinions, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/in-ukraine-lenin-finally-falls/2014/02/28/a6ab2a8e-9f0c-11e3-9ba6-800d1192d08b_story.html